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Madison, WI 53717

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October 11, 2013

Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
9300 East Hampton Drive
Capitol Heights, MD 20743

RE: *In the Matter of Connect America Fund, A National Broadband Plan for Our Future, Establishing Just and Reasonable Rates for Local Exchange Carriers, High-Cost Universal Service Support, Developing a Unified Intercarrier Compensation Regime, Federal-State Joint Board on Universal Service, Lifeline and Link-Up, Universal Service Reform – Mobility Fund, WC Docket No. 10-90, GN Docket No. 09-51, WC Docket No. 07-135, WC Docket No. 05-337, CC Docket No. 01-92, CC Docket No. 96-45, WC Docket No. 03-109, WT Docket No. 10-208, Order, 27 FCC Rcd 605 (2012).*

With this letter we file **Wisconsin RSA #7 Limited Partnership's (SAC 339024)** FCC Form 481, which is due to the Commission on or before October 15, 2013.

This filing has already been certified online with USAC. A paper copy has been forwarded to the Ho Chunk Nation, and an electronic filing has been made with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin.

Please call me at 608-664-9110 if you have any questions concerning this filing.

KIESLING ASSOCIATES LLP

Robert R. Abrams
Senior Telecommunications Consultant

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Al Aymar, COO, Wisconsin RSA #7 Limited Partnership dba Element Mobile
President's Office, Ho Chunk Nation
Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

**FCC Form 481 - Carrier Annual Reporting
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481
OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819
July 2013

<010> Study Area Code	339024
<015> Study Area Name	WI RSA #7 Limited Partnership
<020> Program Year	2014
<030> Contact Name: Person USAC should contact with questions about this data	Al Aymar
<035> Contact Telephone Number: Number of the person identified in data line <030>	715-818-5423
<039> Contact Email Address: Email of the person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com

ANNUAL REPORTING FOR ALL CARRIERS		54.313 Completion Required	54.422 Completion Required
(check box when complete)			
<100> Service Quality Improvement Reporting	(complete attached worksheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<200> Outage Reporting (voice)	(complete attached worksheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<210> <input type="checkbox"/> <-- check box if no outages to report			
<300> Unfulfilled Service Requests (voice)	<input type="text" value="0"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<310> Detail on Attempts (voice)	(attach descriptive document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<320> Unfulfilled Service Requests (broadband)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<330> Detail on Attempts (broadband)	(attach descriptive document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<400> Number of Complaints per 1,000 customers (voice)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<410> Fixed	<input type="text" value="0.04"/>		
<420> Mobile			
<430> Number of Complaints per 1,000 customers (broadband)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<440> Fixed			
<450> Mobile			
<500> Service Quality Standards & Consumer Protection Rules Compliance	(check to indicate certification)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<510> <input type="text" value="339024wi510"/>	(attached descriptive document)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<600> Functionality in Emergency Situations	(check to indicate certification)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<610> <input type="text" value="339024wi610"/>	(attached descriptive document)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<700> Company Price Offerings (voice)	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<710> Company Price Offerings (broadband)	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<800> Operating Companies and Affiliates	(complete attached worksheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<900> Tribal Land Offerings (Y/N)? <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	(if yes, complete attached worksheet)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<1000> Voice Services Rate Comparability	(check to indicate certification)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<1010> <input type="text" value=""/>	(attach descriptive document)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<1100> Terrestrial Backhaul (Y/N)? <input checked="" type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>	(if not, check to indicate certification)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<1110>	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<1200> Terms and Condition for Lifeline Customers	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Price Cap Carriers, Proceed to Price Cap Additional Documentation Worksheet

Including Rate-of-Return Carriers affiliated with Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers

<2000>	(check to indicate certification)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<2005>	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Rate of Return Carriers, Proceed to ROR Additional Documentation Worksheet

<3000>	(check to indicate certification)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<3005>	(complete attached worksheet)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**(100) Service Quality Improvement Reporting
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	339024
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<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	715-818-5423
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com
<110>	Has your company received its ETC certification from the FCC?	(yes / no) <input type="radio"/> <input checked="" type="radio"/>
	If your answer to Line <110> is yes, do you have an existing §54.202(a) "5	
<111>	year plan" filed with the FCC?	(yes / no) <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

If your answer to Line <111> is yes, then you are required to file a progress report, on line <112> delineating the status of your company's existing § 54.202(a) "5 year plan" on file with the FCC, as it relates to your provision of voice telephony service.

- <112> Attach Five-Year Service Quality Improvement Plan or, in subsequent years, your annual progress report filed pursuant to 47 C.F.R. § 54.313(a)(1). If your company is a CETC which only receives frozen support, your progress report is only required to address voice telephony service.

 Name of Attached Document (.pdf)

Please check these boxes below to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 112, contains a progress report on its five-year service quality improvement plan pursuant to § 54.202(a). The information shall be submitted at the wire center level or census block as appropriate.

- <113> Maps detailing progress towards meeting plan targets
- <114> Report how much universal service (USF) support was received
- <115> How (USF) was used to improve service quality
- <116> How (USF) was used to improve service coverage
- <117> How (USF) was used to improve service capacity
- <118> Provide an explanation of network improvement targets not met in the prior calendar year.

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<010>	Study Area Code	339024
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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com

-- See attached worksheet --

<010>	Study Area Code	339024
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1/1/2013	
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-- See attached worksheet	
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July 2013

**(800) Operating Companies
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

July 2013

<010>	Study Area Code	339024
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<020>	Program Year	2014
<030>	Contact Name - Person USAC should contact regarding this data	Al Aymar
<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	715-818-5423
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com
<810>	Reporting Carrier	WI RSA #7 Limited Partnership
<811>	Holding Company	N/A
<812>	Operating Company	WI RSA #7 Limited Partnership

[illegible]

**(900) Tribal Lands Reporting
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

July 2013

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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com
<910>	Tribal Land(s) on which ETC Serves	Ho Chunk Nation

<920> Tribal Government Engagement Obligation

339024wi920

Name of Attached Document (.pdf)

If your company serves Tribal lands, please select (Yes,No, NA) for each these boxes to confirm the status described on the attached PDF, on line 920, demonstrates coordination with the Tribal government pursuant to § 54.313(a)(9) includes:

- <921> Needs assessment and deployment planning with a focus on Tribal community anchor institutions;
- <922> Feasibility and sustainability planning;
- <923> Marketing services in a culturally sensitive manner;
- <924> Compliance with Rights of way processes
- <925> Compliance with Land Use permitting requirements
- <926> Compliance with Facilities Siting rules
- <927> Compliance with Environmental Review processes
- <928> Compliance with Cultural Preservation review processes
- <929> Compliance with Tribal Business and Licensing requirements.

Select (Yes,No, NA)
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes

**(1100) No Terrestrial Backhaul Reporting
Data Collection Form**

FCC Form 481

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

July 2013

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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com

<1120> Please check this box to confirm no terrestrial backhaul
options exist within the supported area pursuant to § 54.313(G) ☐

<1130> Please check this box to confirm the reporting carrier offers
broadband service of at least 1 Mbps downstream and 256 kbps
upstream within the supported area pursuant to § 54.313(G) ☐

(1200) Terms and Condition for Lifeline Customers
Lifeline
Data Collection Form

FCC Form 481
 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819
 July 2013

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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com

<1210> Terms & Conditions of Voice Telephony Lifeline Plans 339024wil210

Name of attached document (.pdf)

<1220> Link to Public Website HTTP _____

“Please check these boxes below to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 1210, or the website listed, on line 1220, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.422(a)(2) annual reporting for ETCs receiving low-income support, carriers must annually report:

<1221> Information describing the terms and conditions of any voice telephony service plans offered to Lifeline subscribers, ☒

<1222> Details on the number of minutes provided as part of the plan, ☒

<1223> Additional charges for toll calls, and rates for each such plan. ☒

(2000) Price Cap Carrier Additional Documentation

FCC Form 481

Data Collection Form

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

Including Rate-of-Return Carriers affiliated with Price Cap Local Exchange Carriers

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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com

CHECK the boxes below to note compliance as a recipient of Incremental Connect America Phase I support, frozen High Cost support, High Cost support to offset access charge reductions, and Connect America Phase II support as set forth in 47 CFR § 54.313(b),(c),(d),(e) the information reported on this form and in the documents attached below is accurate.

Incremental Connect America Phase I reporting

- <2010> 2nd Year Certification {47 CFR § 54.313(b)(1)}
- <2011> 3rd Year Certification {47 CFR § 54.313(b)(2)}

☐
☐
Price Cap Carrier Receiving Frozen Support Certification {47 CFR § 54.312(a)}

- <2012> 2013 Frozen Support Certification
- <2013> 2014 Frozen Support Certification
- <2014> 2015 Frozen Support Certification
- <2015> 2016 and future Frozen Support Certification

☐
☐
☐
☐
Price Cap Carrier Connect America ICC Support {47 CFR § 54.313(d)}

- <2016> Certification Support Used to Build Broadband

☐
Connect America Phase II Reporting {47 CFR § 54.313(e)}

- <2017> 3rd year Broadband Service Certification
- <2018> 5th year Broadband Service Certification
- <2019> Interim Progress Certification
- <2020> Please check the box to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 2021, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.313 (e)(3)(ii), as a recipient of CAF Phase II support shall provide the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which began providing access to broadband service in the preceding calendar year.
- <2021> Interim Progress Community Anchor Institutions

☐
☐
☐
☐

Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information

(3000) Rate Of Return Carrier Additional Documentation

FCC Form 481

Data Collection Form

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CHECK the boxes below to note compliance on its five year service quality plan (pursuant to 47 CFR § 54.202(a)) and, for privately held carriers, ensuring compliance with the financial reporting requirements set forth in 47 CFR § 54.313(f)(2). I further certify that the information reported on this form and in the documents attached below is accurate.

Progress Report on 5 Year Plan

(3010)	Milestone Certification {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(1)(i)} Please check this box to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 3012,	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3011)	contains the required information pursuant to § 54.313 (f)(1)(ii), as a recipient of CAF Phase II support shall provide the number, names, and addresses of community anchor institutions to which began providing access to broadband service in the preceding calendar year.		
(3012)	Community Anchor Institutions {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(1)(ii)}	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3013)	Is your company a Privately Held ROR Carrier {47 CFR § 54.313(f)(2)}		<input type="checkbox"/> (Yes/No)
(3014)	If yes, does your company file the RUS annual report Please check these boxes to confirm that the attached PDF, on line 3017, contains the required information pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2) compliance requires:		<input type="checkbox"/> (Yes/No)
(3015)	Electronic copy of their annual RUS reports (Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers)		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3016)	PDF of Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3017)	If the response is yes on line 3014, attach your company's RUS annual report and all required documentation	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3018)	If the response is no on line 3014, Is your company audited? If the response is yes on line 3018, please check the boxes below to confirm your submission, on line 3026 pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2), contains :		<input type="checkbox"/> (Yes/No)
(3019)	Either a copy of their audited financial statement; or (2) a financial report in a format comparable to RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3020)	PDF of Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3021)	Management letter issued by the independent certified public accountant that performed the company's financial audit. If the response is no on line 3018, please check the boxes below to confirm your submission, on line 3026 pursuant to § 54.313(f)(2), contains: Copy of their financial statement which has been subject to review by an independent certified public accountant; or 2) a financial report in a format comparable to RUS Operating Report for Telecommunications Borrowers,		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3022)	Underlying information subjected to a review by an independent certified public accountant		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3023)	Underlying information subjected to an officer certification.		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3024)	Underlying information subjected to an officer certification.		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3025)	PDF of Balance Sheet, Income Statement and Statement of Cash Flows		<input type="checkbox"/>
(3026)	Attach the worksheet listing required information	Name of Attached Document Listing Required Information	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Certification - Reporting Carrier
Data Collection Form**

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 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819
 July 2013

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<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REPORTING CARRIER, IF THE REPORTING CARRIER IS FILING ANNUAL REPORTING ON ITS OWN BEHALF:

Certification of Officer as to the Accuracy of the Data Reported for the Annual Reporting for CAF or LI Recipients	
I certify that I am an officer of the reporting carrier; my responsibilities include ensuring the accuracy of the annual reporting requirements for universal service support recipients; and, to the best of my knowledge, the information reported on this form and in any attachments is accurate.	
Name of Reporting Carrier:	
Signature of Authorized Officer:	Date
Printed name of Authorized Officer:	
Title or position of Authorized Officer:	
Telephone number of Authorized Officer:	
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	Filing Due Date for this form:
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

**Certification - Agent / Carrier
Data Collection Form**

 FCC Form 481
 OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819
 July 2013

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<035>	Contact Telephone Number - Number of person identified in data line <030>	715-818-5423
<039>	Contact Email Address - Email Address of person identified in data line <030>	al.aymar@elementmobile.com

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE REPORTING CARRIER, IF AN AGENT IS FILING ANNUAL REPORTS ON THE CARRIER'S BEHALF:

Certification of Officer to Authorize an Agent to File Annual Reports for CAF or LI Recipients on Behalf of Reporting Carrier	
I certify that (Name of Agent) <u>Kiesling Associates LLP</u> is authorized to submit the information reported on behalf of the reporting carrier. I also certify that I am an officer of the reporting carrier; my responsibilities include ensuring the accuracy of the annual data reporting requirements provided to the authorized agent; and, to the best of my knowledge, the reports and data provided to the authorized agent is accurate.	
Name of Authorized Agent:	Kiesling Associates LLP
Name of Reporting Carrier:	WI RSA #7 Limited Partnership
Signature of Authorized Officer:	CERTIFIED ONLINE Date: 10/11/2013
Printed name of Authorized Officer:	Douglas Wenzlaff
Title or position of Authorized Officer:	President
Telephone number of Authorized Officer:	715-421-8165
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	339024 Filing Due Date for this form: 10/15/2013
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE AUTHORIZED AGENT:

Certification of Agent Authorized to File Annual Reports for CAF or LI Recipients on Behalf of Reporting Carrier	
I, as agent for the reporting carrier, certify that I am authorized to submit the annual reports for universal service support recipients on behalf of the reporting carrier; I have provided the data reported herein based on data provided by the reporting carrier; and, to the best of my knowledge, the information reported herein is accurate.	
Name of Reporting Carrier:	WI RSA #7 Limited Partnership
Name of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	Kiesling Associates LLP
Signature of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	CERTIFIED ONLINE Date: 10/11/2013
Printed name of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	Kiesling Associates LLP
Title or position of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	Regulatory Consultant
Telephone number of Authorized Agent or Employee of Agent:	608-664-9110
Study Area Code of Reporting Carrier:	339024 Filing Due Date for this form: 10/15/2013
Persons willfully making false statements on this form can be punished by fine or forfeiture under the Communications Act of 1934, 47 U.S.C. §§ 502, 503(b), or fine or imprisonment under Title 18 of the United States Code, 18 U.S.C. § 1001.	

Attachments

Data Collection Form

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

OMB Control No. 3060-0986/OMB Control No. 3060-0819

<220>

[illegible]

FCC Form 481 – Line 510 Service Quality Certification Description

SAC: 339024
State: WI
Name: Wisconsin RSA #7 Limited Partnership dba Element Mobile
Submission: 10/15/2013

47 CFR §54.313(a)(5) requires an ETC to certify that it complies with applicable service quality standards and consumer protection rules.

Wisconsin RSA #7 Limited Partnership dba Element Mobile (Element) complies with applicable service quality standards for telecommunications providers in the Wisconsin State Statutes (§§100.207 and .208) regulating, advertising, sales and collections practices, and as applicable, those of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin in the Wisconsin Administrative Code (*Ch. PSC 165*), regarding Standards for Telecommunications Service.

Element complies with consumer protection requirements including those found in federal Customer Proprietary Network Information (*CPNI; WC Docket No. 04-36*), as well as the applicable state rules of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (*Ch. ATC 123*) covering appropriate subscription and billing practices and (*Ch. ATC 127*) covering appropriate direct marketing practices.

Element certifies it has complied with all applicable requirements and will continue to do so.

FCC Form 481 – Line 610 Ability To Remain Functional In An Emergency Description

SAC: 339024

State: WI

Name: Wisconsin RSA #7 Limited Partnership dba Element Mobile

Submission: 10/15/2013

47 CFR §54.313(a)(6) requires an ETC to certify that it is able to function in emergency situation as set forth in 47 CFR §54.202 (a)(2).

Wisconsin RSA #7 Limited Partnership dba Element Mobile (Element) complies with relevant sections of the Wisconsin Administrative Code, Standards for Telecommunications Service (*Ch. PSC 165.065(1), and (2)*) requiring that it make reasonable provision to meet emergencies resulting from national security requirements, failures of lighting or power service, sudden and prolonged increases in traffic, illness of personnel, or from fire, storm, or similar emergencies.

The company has maintained reasonably adequate provisions for emergency power in response to emergency situations, and performed weekly tests of its back-up power capabilities.

Element certifies it has complied with, and will continue to comply with applicable requirements regarding its ability to remain functional in an emergency situation as set forth in 47 CFR §54.202 (a)(2).

FCC Form 481 – Line 920 Description of Tribal Engagement Activities

SAC: 339024
State: WI
Name: Wisconsin RSA #7 Limited Partnership
Submission: 10/15/2013

47 CFR §54.313(a)(9) requires a recipient, to the extent it serves Tribal lands, document or provide information demonstrating that the ETC had discussions with Tribal governments.

The Ho Chunk Nation occupies small properties within the Study Area. Lifeline service is advertised and available, with no current Tribal subscribers. Data services over cellular are available throughout these Tribal Lands, which include two casinos, a wellness office, a convenience store/gas station, and some residential subscribers within the company's Study Area. The company is in the early stages of developing sales and service relationship with the Tribe. The company has service coverage for all of the Tribe's local community anchor institutions.

A request for Tribal Engagement discussions (attached) was made by the company was followed by additional attempts to identify suitable representatives for these discussions. Ho Chunk tribal representatives were identified and an initial engagement discussion included these agenda items:

- Exchange of contact information and roles, for the development of a continuing liaison between the Ho Chunk and the company.
- Confirmation that Lifeline services remain available, and the preferred pathway for prospective application materials will be through the Tribe's Director of Social Services; Recent changes to the FCC's federal Lifeline Plus and Link-Up Plus programs were covered, as well as the FCC's limitations of one benefit per home unit.
- It is believed that products are services have been marketed in a culturally sensitive manner. Any future issues that surface will be immediately communicated, and then brought back to this group.
- At this time, there are no sites or neighborhoods believed to be in need of improved communications facilities or capabilities. Because voice and cellular data services are widely available in the area, Ho Chunk representatives now have contacts in the event any concerns develop, and will bring any issues to this group.
- There have been no Right-of-Way, tower licensing or other regulatory compliance issues in recent memory. The Ho Chunk opened up a communications pathway through their Historic Preservation Office for the purpose of identifying any future environmental or land use issues the Tribe has. These will be along the same lines as issues managed between tribal branches and state government. Any developing issues of concerns will be reported directly to the company, if they arise.
- Ho Chunk representatives pointed to sovereignty language for new communications service contracts, as required by the Tribe. These will be adopted for all future contracts. There are no other contractual issues needing attention at this time.



November 8, 2012

Jon Greendeer, President
Ho-Chunk Nation
P.O. Box 667
Black River Falls, WI 54616

Dear Jon Greendeer,

Element Mobile, an independent telecommunications provider serving the Wisconsin Rapids area, wishes to engage with the Ho-Chunk National Tribal government about some potential opportunities for wireless broadband expansion on Tribally-owned lands within Element Mobile's service area. Element Mobile is been providing telecommunications and broadband services to residential customers located on or near Ho-Chunk Nation lands, and we are interested in learning about any additional wireless communications needs that your community may have.

In November 2011, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) comprehensively reformed the Universal Service Fund (USF), which helps companies like Element Mobile provide state-of-the-art communications services in high-cost and rural areas.¹ Among the reforms, the FCC adopted a rule requiring Eligible Telecommunications Carriers who receive high-cost USF support to engage with Tribal leaders about broadband deployment on Tribally-owned lands and report annually on five specific outreach activities. In July 2012, the FCC's Office of Native Affairs Policy (ONAP) issued specific guidance on outreach and engagement activities between telecommunications providers and Tribal governments. A copy of this guidance is attached. These initial outreach and engagement activities must take place by the end of 2012.

Given our history of providing wireless communications services to your community, Element Mobile is pleased to invite you and other leaders from the Ho-Chunk Nation government to discuss additional ways that we can meet your wireless communications and broadband needs. Specifically, Element Mobile would like to discuss the following items:

- Needs assessment and deployment planning focused on Tribal community anchor institutions (such as schools, libraries, and health centers);
- Feasibility and sustainability planning;
- Marketing services in a culturally sensitive manner;
- Rights of way processes, land use permitting, facilities siting (e.g. cell sites), and environmental and cultural preservation review processes;
- Compliance with Tribal business and licensing requirements.²

¹ See *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 26 FCC 17663 at 17868-69, para. 637 (2011).

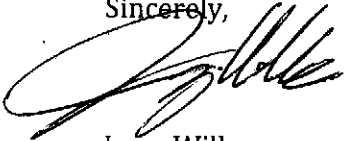
² Tribal business and licensing requirements include business practice licenses that Tribal and non-Tribal business entities, whether located on or off Tribal lands, must obtain upon application to the relevant Tribal government office or division to conduct any business or trade, or deliver any goods or services to the Tribes, Tribal members, or Tribal lands. These include certificates of public convenience and necessity, Tribal business licenses, master licenses, and other related forms of Tribal government licensure.

Element Mobile is interested in learning whether your community has any specific wireless broadband needs that our company may be able to meet, depending on the scope and scale of the project. Are there any needs such as distance learning or telemedicine that Element Mobile could help facilitate? We also want to make sure that we continue to respect your cultural heritage, property rights, business customs, and any other rules and procedures of your government.

Element Mobile is a locally owned company and has been serving the Wisconsin Rapids area for over 20 years. Alltel was the previous manager of the central Wisconsin market area. We are dedicated to serving and employing members of our community, and we want to ensure that the Ho-Chunk Nation is served the best way possible.

Element Mobile extends this invitation to set up an in-person meeting or conference call with members of your Tribal government at your earliest convenience. Please contact Jerry Wilke, Chief Operating Officer, at 715.818.5423 or jerry.wilke@elementmobile.com. We look forward to discussing this important issue with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jerry Wilke', with a stylized, cursive flourish.

Jerry Wilke
Chief Operating Officer

Attachment



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St., S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-6322

DA 12-1165

Released: July 19, 2012

**OFFICE OF NATIVE AFFAIRS AND POLICY,
WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU, AND
WIRELINE COMPETITION BUREAU ISSUE FURTHER GUIDANCE ON
TRIBAL GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT OBLIGATION PROVISIONS OF THE
CONNECT AMERICA FUND**

WC Docket Nos. 10-90, 07-135, 05-337, 03-109
CC Docket Nos. 01-92, 96-45
WT Docket No. 10-208
GN Docket No. 09-51

I. INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

1. By this Public Notice, the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC or Commission) Office of Native Affairs and Policy (ONAP), in coordination with the Wireless Telecommunications and Wireline Competition Bureaus (the Bureaus), provides further guidance on the Tribal engagement obligation adopted in the *USF/ICC Transformation Order*.¹ This document is intended to facilitate the required discussions between Tribal government officials and communications providers either currently providing or seeking to provide service on Tribal lands with the use of Universal Service Fund (USF) support.²

2. The broad goal of the guidance provided today, and future efforts to establish best practices, is to ensure the effective exchange of information that will lead to a common understanding between Tribal governments and communications providers receiving USF support, on the deployment and improvement of communications services on Tribal lands. The Tribal engagement obligation is intended to benefit Tribal government leaders, service providers, and consumers living on Tribal lands, ultimately providing greater connectivity to 21st century economic opportunities, education, health care, and public safety. This obligation is related to the very essence of universal service – facilitating and supporting connectivity to and from the most remote areas of our nation inures to the benefit of all. Requiring Tribal engagement is intended to begin and, in some cases, to strengthen, the dialogue between communications providers and Tribal governments. We anticipate that genuine dialogue and common understandings will ultimately lead to improvement of communications services on Tribal lands.

¹ See *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking, 26 FCC 17663 at 17868-69, para. 637 (2011) (*USF/ICC Transformation Order*); *pets. for review pending sub nom. In re: FCC 11-161*, No. 11-9900 (10th Cir. filed Dec. 18, 2011).

² See *id.* In the context of the *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, "Tribal lands" is defined as "any federally recognized Indian tribe's reservation, pueblo or colony, including former reservations in Oklahoma, Alaska Native regions established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlements [sic] Act (85 Stat. 688), and Indian Allotments, see 47 C.F.R. § 54.400(e), as well as Hawaiian Home Lands—areas held in trust for native Hawaiians by the state of Hawaii, pursuant to the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, Act July 9, 1921, 42 Stat. 108, *et seq.*, as amended." *Id.* at para. 125, n.197.

3. Good guidance, by definition, must include assistance on how to undertake an endeavor with an aim towards success. Any attempt at actual and meaningful dialogue must be predicated on the genuineness of the intent on both sides. This engagement cannot be viewed as simply another “check the box” requirement by either party. In many places, we expect that there are good and productive relationships between communications providers and Tribal Nations. To the extent that there might be existing differences, however, the parties should put aside those differences for the purposes of this engagement. This engagement process should not be approached as an adversarial undertaking. Instead, Tribal governments and carriers should take advantage of the engagement to improve communications and foster a greater common understanding of the factors necessary to deploy and sustain services on Tribal lands, as well as an honest dialogue to learn from one another what factors would lead to success in those endeavors. In all cases, a high degree of receptivity and responsiveness is necessary to achieve meaningful dialogue, as well as confidence in the reliability of information exchanged. Candid and sincere dialogue on both sides will minimize the possibility that unreasonable expectations by either party will derail common understandings and genuine solutions.

4. Creating a substantive, meaningful dialogue is an iterative process, one which, in certain regions, is at its earliest stages of development. In a similar sense, the further guidance contained in this Public Notice represents the first step in the Commission’s implementation of the Tribal engagement obligation. We recognize that priorities and plans of individual Tribal governments and individual service providers can vary greatly, as do the existing relationships between Tribal governments and carriers currently serving Tribal lands. Therefore, there is no one size fits all guidance that can be provided that will be universally applicable. As a result, the guidance provided herein is somewhat general in nature at this stage, but we anticipate that our guidance, as well as the development of best practices, will evolve over time based on initial implementation experiences and the feedback of both Tribal governments and communications providers.

5. ONAP, in coordination with the Bureaus, will track and monitor this feedback and will develop further guidance in the form of best practices based on actual experiences.³ In an effort to further facilitate engagement efforts at this initial stage, ONAP will employ training and industry meeting opportunities, as well as its coordination events with Tribal Nations. These efforts will include, for example, working with national and regional communications industry associations and national and regional inter-Tribal government associations and organizations.⁴ ONAP will focus particular efforts -- for example, by identifying commonalities, increasing efficiencies, building upon current working relationships, and engaging all regional stakeholders, as appropriate -- to foster engagement in states and regions in which Tribes and providers are particularly remote and in which Tribes are particularly numerous.⁵ ONAP, in coordination with the Bureaus, will continue to serve as a resource for Tribal governments and communications providers and is always available for individually tailored assistance.

³ See *id.* at para. 637, n.1054 (directing ONAP, in coordination with the Bureaus, to develop best practices).

⁴ See Letter from the Hon. Mark Begich, United States Senator, State of Alaska; the Hon. Lisa Murkowski, United States Senator, State of Alaska; and the Hon. Don Young, United States Congressman, State of Alaska, to the Hon. Julius Genachowski, Chairman, FCC, dated Feb. 22, 2012 (“[W]e request that you work with the tribal groups, carriers and the State of Alaska to clarify the tribal consultation requirements included in the reform order”). See also Letter of Becky Hultberg, Commissioner, Department of Administration, State of Alaska, to the Hon. Julius Genachowski, Chairman, FCC, dated February 17, 2012.

⁵ For example, there are 229 federally recognized Tribes in Alaska, 108 in California, 38 in Oklahoma, 23 in New Mexico, and 21 in Arizona. See Federal Register Notice – Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services from the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs, 75 Fed. Reg. 60,810 (Oct. 1, 2010). See also Supplemental Federal Register Notice – Indian Entities 1 Page Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services from the United State Bureau of Indian Affairs, 75 Fed. Reg. 66,124 (Oct. 27, 2010).

II. BACKGROUND

6. In the *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, the Commission adopted a Tribal engagement requirement for all eligible telecommunications carriers (ETCs) either currently serving or seeking to serve Tribal lands.⁶ The Commission agreed with commenters that engagement between Tribal governments and communications providers is vitally important to the successful deployment of and provision of service on Tribal lands.⁷

7. The Commission therefore required, at a minimum, that ETCs demonstrate on an annual basis that they have meaningfully engaged with Tribal governments in their universal service supported areas.⁸ At a minimum, the *USF/ICC Order* stated that such discussions must include: (1) a needs assessment and deployment planning with a focus on Tribal community anchor institutions; (2) feasibility and sustainability planning; (3) marketing services in a culturally sensitive manner; (4) rights of way processes, land use permitting, facilities siting, environmental and cultural preservation review processes; and (5) compliance with Tribal business and licensing requirements.⁹ Failure to satisfy the Tribal engagement obligation will subject ETCs to financial consequences, including potential reduction in universal service support should they fail to fulfill their engagement obligations.¹⁰

8. In requiring Tribal engagement, the Commission did not intend to supplant its own ongoing obligation to consult with Tribes on a government-to-government basis, but instead recognized the important role that all parties play in expediting communications service to Tribal lands throughout the nation, including in Alaska and Hawaii.¹¹ ETCs will be required to submit to the Commission and appropriate Tribal government officials an annual certification and summary of their compliance with the Tribal government engagement obligation as part of the new Connect America Fund reporting requirements.¹² The Commission defined appropriate Tribal government officials as elected or duly authorized government officials of federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages.¹³ For Hawaiian Home Lands, this engagement must occur with the State of Hawaii Department of Hawaiian Home Lands and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.¹⁴ The Commission delegated to ONAP, in coordination with the Bureaus, the authority to develop specific procedures regarding the Tribal

⁶ See *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, 26 FCC Rcd at 17868-69, para. 637.

⁷ *Id.* Mobility Fund and Tribal Mobility Fund Phase I winning bidders will be required to comply with this Tribal engagement obligation at the long-form application stage, in annual reports, and prior to any disbursement of support. *Id.* at para. 489. We note, however, that any such engagement must be done consistent with our auction rules prohibiting certain communications during the competitive bidding process. *Id.* at para. 810. In the *Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking*, the Commission proposed to apply the same Tribal engagement obligation to Phase II of the general and Tribal Mobility Funds and sought comment on that proposal. *Id.* at para. 1166.

⁸ *Id.* at para. 637. See also 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313(a)(9), 54.1004(d), 54.1009.

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ See *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, 26 FCC Rcd at 17868-69, para. 637.

¹¹ *Id.*

¹² *Id.* See also *id.* at para. 575 (“Under this uniform framework, ETCs will provide annual reports and certifications regarding specific aspects of their compliance with public interest obligations to the Commission, USAC [the Universal Service Administrative Company], and the relevant state commission, relevant authority in a U.S. Territory, or Tribal government, as appropriate by April 1 of each year.”) See generally *id.* at paras. 576-606 (articulating specific reporting requirements). See also *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Order, 27 FCC Rcd 2142 at 2144-47, paras. 4-14 (2012) (*USF/ICC Clarification Order*) (revising and clarifying certain reporting obligations for recipients of Connect America Fund support).

¹³ *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, 26 FCC Rcd at 17869, para. 637, n.1053.

¹⁴ *Id.*

engagement process, as necessary.¹⁵ The Commission also directed ONAP, in coordination with the Bureaus, to develop best practices regarding the Tribal engagement process to help facilitate these discussions.¹⁶

III. FURTHER GUIDANCE ON THE TRIBAL GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT OBLIGATION

A. Overview/General Guidance

9. As stated above, the purpose of this guidance is to ensure the effective exchange of information between Tribal governments and communications providers concerning the deployment and improvement of communications services on Tribal lands throughout the nation, including in Alaska and Hawaii. This exchange of information should foster new opportunities for genuine dialogue that could achieve an alignment of interests and goals. Between certain carriers and Tribal governments, this will be an opportunity for introduction and dialogue in the first instance. In other parts of the country, this will be an opportunity for a new depth of dialogue and more meaningful interaction. An important goal of this guidance is the achievement of a level of engagement between principals on both sides that represents collaborative discussions and actual live conversation.¹⁷ We encourage stakeholders to go beyond merely perfunctory exchanges of basic documents, simplistic sales or marketing presentations, or one-dimensional lists of demands.

10. It is imperative that this dialogue be undertaken at a level within communications providers and Tribal governments that is commensurate with this important engagement requirement. The discourse should be between decision-makers on both sides. While it may be necessary to include administrative staff on both sides to administer and maintain the continuity of relations, this engagement cannot be merely between sales and marketing individuals on one side and administrative staff or advisors on the other. The perspectives on needs, expectations, priorities, and abilities that would formulate meaningful exchange often can come only from those with the requisite authority to make decisions.

11. On the Tribal government side, there are certain actions that should be taken to best prepare for this valuable engagement. It is important for Tribal leaders to recognize and act upon this opportunity to become organized, maintain continuity, and provide for certainty in conveying their communications needs and priorities. The Commission has long recognized the right of sovereign Tribal governments "to set their own communications priorities and goals for the welfare of their membership."¹⁸ This is a critical time for Tribal Nations to update and make comprehensive their communications priorities and goals. Tribal governments should consider all community needs that would be supported by communications services. These might include, but are not limited to, anchor institutions, economic development, education, healthcare, and public safety. Each Tribal Nation has unique elements to its communications needs and priorities, but effectively articulating those needs is a critical first step in addressing them.

12. As Tribal government administrations change and develop, this is an important opportunity to demonstrate, both to communications providers and to the Commission, their continuity in communications priorities and goals. Certain Tribal governments have created their own governmental

¹⁵ *Id.* Although our focus here is on providing guidance, the Commission thus will consider the need for further guidance, or to clarify the existing rules regarding Tribal engagement or pursue new rules with specific procedures, if warranted in the future based on actual experiences and outcomes resulting from this guidance.

¹⁶ *Id.* at n.1054.

¹⁷ For example, engagement may occur when necessary by phone or video conference where extreme weather conditions and/or extreme remoteness are present.

¹⁸ Statement of Policy on Establishing a Government-to-Government Relationship with Indian Tribes, 16 FCC Rcd 4078, 4080-81 (2000) (*Tribal Policy Statement*).

offices and commissions to interact with the FCC and communications providers. Others have designated key members of their Tribal Councils to lead their communications prerogatives for their governments, in effect creating communications committees on their Councils. Other Tribes have yet to organize their governmental or administrative systems with respect to communications services. This engagement obligation necessitates a level of organization within the Tribal government that can convey both a high degree of certainty in the communications priorities of the Tribal Nation and maintain the continuity of those priorities to the greatest extent possible in a governmental environment that, by definition, changes over time. Updating Tribal communications priorities and goals, and ensuring the establishment of effective organizational structures concerning communications issues, are important first steps. However, ETCs must begin the Tribal engagement process this year to be able to report on meaningful engagement by July 1, 2013.¹⁹ Therefore, Tribal governments may need to take interim measures in the short term as they consider establishing new or modified communications goals and priorities.

13. Tribal Nations also should immediately begin preparations to receive, record, and process this engagement dialogue and any related correspondence. Specific efforts should be made to chronicle details of engagement dialogue sessions. Recordkeeping should be established for documentation of the initial contact, any follow-up communications, and the resulting annual certification documentation. Records should include, for example, a summary of all verbal interactions as well as copies of all electronic and hard copy communications.²⁰

14. Similarly, communications providers should take immediate steps to prepare for and initiate engagement with the Tribal governments whose lands they serve. Certifications articulating the steps taken to comply with the annual Tribal engagement obligation in 2012 are due on July 1, 2013 and each year thereafter.²¹ That is, the Tribal engagement obligation must be fulfilled by the end of each calendar year. Communications providers should, for example, take immediate steps to establish a lead and/or a team within their companies and to identify the appropriate Tribal government leaders with whom they will initiate the engagement process. The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)²² maintains a routinely updated and comprehensive directory of American Indian Tribal and Alaska Native Village government leaders, addresses, and telephone numbers. The NCAI Tribal directory can be sorted by geographical area and can be found at <http://www.ncai.org/tribal-directory>.²³ Where needed, ONAP also will serve as a resource for communications providers and Tribal governments.

15. In addition, communications providers should retain copies of all communications with Tribal leaders they would need in order to demonstrate compliance with their annual certification requirement. In the event that a Tribal government does not respond to repeated efforts to engage, the provider should document all attempts at engagement and certify to that effect. As with the entire engagement process, reasonableness should prevail. As a general matter, we expect that a provider would not be penalized for a failure to respond on the part of a Tribal Nation, if the provider can demonstrate repeated good faith efforts to meaningfully engage with the Tribal government.

¹⁹ See *Connect America Fund*, WC Docket No. 10-90 *et al.*, Third Order on Reconsideration, FCC 12-52 at para. 10 (rel. May 14, 2012) (*Third Reconsideration Order*) (changing the filing deadline from April 1 to July 1).

²⁰ For example, all ETCs receiving high-cost are now subject to a 10-year document retention requirement. See *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, 26 FCC Rcd at 17864, para. 620. See also *Third Reconsideration Order*, FCC 12-52 at para. 14.

²¹ See *Third Reconsideration Order*, FCC 12-52 at para. 10. See also 47 C.F.R. §§ 54.313, 54.1009..

²² NCAI is the nation's oldest, largest, and most representative inter-Tribal government and communities organization, representing American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages.

²³ For a listing of all federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages, see www.bia.gov/cs/groups/xofa/documents/document/idc012038.pdf. ONAP, in coordination with the Bureaus, will endeavor to provide additional resources to Tribal governments and carriers to help facilitate this engagement, including the possibility of using the Commission's website as a repository of information.

B. Needs Assessment and Deployment Planning

16. Tribal governments play a vital role in identifying and serving the needs and interests of their local communities, often in remote, insular, cyclically impoverished communities with a historic lack of critical infrastructure. Tribal government leaders are intimately acquainted with their members' needs and have valuable insight into how to meet them. "Tribal-centric" business models – those that actively engage the Tribe, its core community institutions, and members in deployment and adoption planning – have a greater chance of establishing sustainable services on Tribal lands.²⁴ Communications providers also have experience and a valuable perspective on the challenges, economics, and other realities of providing service to remote, low-income, and underserved regions of the country, including certain Tribal lands.

17. The Tribal engagement obligation provides Tribal governments and communications providers alike with a new opportunity – the opportunity to have a genuine conversation about communications needs and deployment planning on Tribal lands. When telephone service was originally deployed, there was no such obligation and, as a result, in many instances, Tribal needs and carrier deployment efforts were not aligned. The Tribal engagement obligation affords both Tribal governments and communications providers the opportunity to move forward with a shared vision. This will only occur, however, if Tribal governments and communications providers alike take advantage of this historic opportunity to improve the communications landscape on Tribal lands.

18. To that end, Tribal governments should come to the table with a serious, well-thought out assessment of the Tribes' communications needs. Issues that Tribal governments should consider include, for example, the Tribe's communications goals, needs, and priorities, as well as what the Tribe intends to do with communications services (e.g., provide connectivity to those living on Tribal lands, encourage economic opportunity). Tribal governments should also assess what core community or anchor institutions are central to deployment, and what in the nature and operations of these institutions is relevant to the need for communications services. In addition, Tribal governments should consider whether there are economic factors and possibly Tribally-driven opportunities that will assist in making the business case for deployment on Tribal lands, as well as opportunities where Tribal governments and communications providers can partner. In analyzing and discussing communications goals, needs, and priorities, Tribal governments should note that recipients of Connect America Fund (CAF) support, including the Mobility Fund, are subject to public interest obligations, as established in the *USF/ICC Transformation Order*.²⁵

19. Similarly, communications providers should come to the table ready to articulate their deployment priorities, the process by which they arrived at these priorities, and their initial plans for deployment on Tribal lands. Issues that communications providers should be prepared to discuss include, for example, the services they currently deploy, and what services they intend to deploy, on Tribal lands. Providers should also be prepared to discuss their timelines for the provision of services not currently available on Tribal lands, as well as their priorities in terms of service and the factors that led them to prioritize deployment to particular areas. Communications providers should also identify any opportunities they envision to partner with Tribal governments.

C. Feasibility and Sustainability Planning

20. Feasibility and sustainability planning for communications services on Tribal lands presents issues of concern for both Tribal governments and communications providers. Tribal governments generally want services rapidly deployed for their members to support the economic, educational, public safety, and health care opportunities that communications services afford. Communications providers

²⁴ See *Improving Communications Services for Native Nations*, CG Docket No. 11-41, Notice of Inquiry, 26 FCC Rcd 2672, 2679-80, para. 12 (2011) (*Native Nations NOI*).

²⁵ See *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, 26 FCC Rcd at 17691-17709, paras. 74-114.

generally want business models that will be practical in terms of build out, and viable in terms of revenue flow and quality of service. While some commonalities likely exist, we believe there are many differences from one provider to another and from one Tribal government to another. The Tribal engagement obligation affords both parties the opportunity to share specific perspectives and information and to begin charting a path forward to address feasibility and sustainability in coordination with one another.

21. Tribal lands nationwide face some of the greatest challenges to the feasibility and sustainability of a 21st century communications infrastructure, including rugged and remote terrain and often endemic levels of poverty. Therefore, communications build out plans based purely on population density or proximity to other robust networks can face major cost benefit analysis challenges. Tribal government leaders, who are largely responsible for managing a wide array of government services and economic opportunities for their communities, are uniquely situated to advise communications providers of the specific challenges associated with deploying and sustaining a communications network on their lands. The Tribal engagement obligation will facilitate discussion between Tribal government leaders and communications providers, affording providers an important opportunity to draw upon the knowledge gained to inform and coordinate their feasibility and sustainability planning.

22. Tribal Nations should be prepared to discuss any additional resources they may bring to bear in feasibility and sustainability planning for communications services, because many federal grant or loan programs provide direct access to, or particular standing for, Tribal Nations and their entities. That is, there are federal government programs that support infrastructure deployment and support the economic, health, safety, and welfare missions in Native communities—the very same priorities for the deployment of robust communications networks on Tribal lands. For example, Tribes may be considering business ventures that would benefit from coordination on communications planning at the outset. Together, providers and Tribal Nations have the opportunity to discuss how to coordinate in planning, providing, and meeting the expenses for communications services on Tribal lands.

23. When addressing the issues of sustainability on Tribal lands, one must also calibrate expectations and develop an awareness of the unique nature of Tribal communities. Issues such as cyclical poverty, remoteness, and deployment priorities all inform the potential sustainability and ultimate profitability of a particular communications model on Tribal lands. That is, it can take a longer period of time to develop a sustainable enterprise on many Tribal lands. Increased coordination between Tribal governments and communications providers on specific elements of feasibility will heighten the chances of ultimate sustainability for communications business models on Tribal lands.

D. Marketing Services in a Culturally Sensitive Manner

24. As noted above, for the purposes of the USF/ICC proceeding and, therefore, the Tribal engagement obligation, Tribal lands are comprised of the lands of the approximately 566 federally recognized American Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Villages, as well as Hawaiian Home Lands.²⁶ Tribal lands represent a rich and diverse array of cultural heritage, history, practices, and pride. Outside the context of Tribally owned and operated providers, however, seldom have these cultural factors been fully considered in the marketing and deployment of communications services on Tribal lands. The Tribal engagement obligation provides Tribal governments and communications providers with the opportunity to discuss and explore ways in which they can coordinate or partner to ensure that services are marketed in a manner that will relate directly to the community, resonate with consumers, and stimulate increased adoption of services on Tribal lands.

25. Issues that Tribal governments and communications providers may wish to discuss include the tailoring of service offerings to the community through, for example, the feasibility of a local presence in the community. For example, locating a retail presence within a Tribal community and employing

²⁶ See *supra* n.2.

members of that community may increase awareness of and sensitivity to local cultural and communications needs. Providers and Tribal governments also may wish to discuss whether developing materials, separately or jointly, specific to the Tribal community would be beneficial to either the provider or consumers on Tribal lands. In addition, providers and Tribal governments also may wish to discuss what other elements of their respective organizations may need to be engaged. For Tribal governments, this may mean administrative planning, community service, and other governmental offices. For providers, this may mean customer service, technical assistance, and commercial business divisions. Through a heightened mutual understanding of one another's needs, we anticipate that Tribal governments and communications providers may discover opportunities for working together that will yield benefits to all. Studies indicate that these efforts present genuine opportunities for success, because where Native Nations and their community members have access to broadband, their rates of Internet use are on par with, if not higher than, national averages.²⁷

E. Rights of Way and Other Permitting and Review Processes

26. There are numerous regulatory processes with which service providers must comply in order to provide communications services on Tribal lands, including rights of way, land use permitting, facilities siting, and environmental and cultural review processes.²⁸ Certain of these processes involve other federal agencies, such as the Department of Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and failure to comply with these processes may result in a finding of trespass. Given the widely varying circumstances on different Tribal lands, a one size fits all approach is not appropriate here. Instead, in the context of the Tribal engagement obligation, the common goal for Tribal governments and communications providers should be one of greater mutual understanding about the relevant rights of way and other permitting and review processes on Tribal lands and a plan for informing communications providers of procedures in a helpful and instructive manner, designed to bring companies into compliance, where applicable.

27. To that end, Tribal governments and communications providers should come to the table prepared to discuss the relevant rights of way and other permitting and review processes, as well as the challenges associated with these processes. For example, with respect to the BIA's appraisal process for rights of way, dialogue that prioritizes early notification might expedite Tribal governments' consultations with BIA and consent.²⁹ Tribal governments should have a comprehensive list of all processes with which communications providers serving their Tribal lands are required to comply, such as rights of way, land use permitting, facilities siting, and environmental and cultural review processes. Communications providers should have documentation of any and all processes with which they currently comply. All of this information will provide the foundation for a substantive discussion of all requirements and steps for moving forward together.

F. Compliance with Tribal Business and Licensing Requirements

28. As sovereign institutions, Tribal governments have the authority to impose Tribal business and licensing requirements on all entities doing business on their lands. While the type and form of requirements may vary greatly from one Tribal land to another, Tribal business and licensing requirements include business practice licenses that Tribal and non-Tribal business entities, whether located on or off Tribal lands, must obtain upon application to the relevant Tribal government office or division to conduct any business or trade, or deliver any goods or services, to the Tribe, Tribal members, or Tribal lands. The form of these licenses vary greatly, including certificates of public convenience and necessity, Tribal business licenses, master licenses, and other related forms of Tribal government

²⁷ See Traci L. Morris Ph.D., Native Public Media and Sascha D. Meinrath, New America Foundation, *NEW MEDIA, TECHNOLOGY AND INDIAN USE IN INDIAN COUNTRY: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE ANALYSES* (Nov. 19, 2009) (*NPM/NAF New Media Study*).

²⁸ See *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, 26 FCC Rcd at 17868-69, para. 637.

²⁹ See generally 25 C.F.R. Part 169 – Rights-of-Way Over Indian Lands.

licensure.³⁰

29. As part of the Tribal engagement obligation, Tribal governments and communications providers should come to the table prepared to discuss in detail the relevant Tribal business and licensing requirements. Tribal governments should have a comprehensive list of any such requirements applicable to the provision of communications services. They should be prepared to provide an explanation of precisely what all such requirements entail, including specific application procedures and timeframes, as well as the governmental offices involved in the licensing process. Communications providers should be prepared to provide evidence of compliance with any Tribal business practice licenses with which they currently comply for that Tribe. Consistent with the discussion above regarding rights of way and other permitting and review processes, the common goal here should be one of greater mutual understanding about the relevant Tribal business licensing requirements and a plan for bringing companies into compliance, where applicable.

IV. CONCLUSION

30. In conclusion, the Tribal engagement obligation represents an opportunity for Tribal governments and communications providers to coordinate on many issues critical to the deployment and adoption of communications technologies on Tribal lands. As discussed in the introduction, this guidance represents the first step in an iterative process. That is, this guidance will evolve over time based on initial experiences and feedback from Tribal governments and communications providers. In an effort to identify commonalities, increase efficiencies, and build upon current working relationships, ONAP will engage all regional stakeholders, as appropriate, and will respond to needs articulated by communications providers and Tribal governments.

V. CONTACTS

31. For further information concerning this guidance, contact the offices listed below:

Office of Native Affairs and Policy

Geoffrey Blackwell at (202) 418-3629

Irene Flannery at (202) 418-1307

Wireless Telecommunications Bureau

Sue McNeil at (202) 418-7619

Wireline Competition Bureau

Joseph Cavender at (202) 418-1548

- FCC -

³⁰ See *USF/ICC Transformation Order*, 26 FCC Rcd at 17868-69, para. 637, n.1052.

FCC Form 481 – Line 1210 Lifeline Service Terms & Conditions

SAC: 339024
State: WI
Name: Wisconsin RSA #7 Limited Partnership dba Element Mobile
Submission: 10/15/2013

Terms, Conditions, Plans & Pricing for Lifeline

Qualifying subscribers may choose any individual post-paid plan the company offers.

Pricing Plans: <http://www.elementmobile.com/pages/PLANS-%26-PRICING.html>

Eligibility

Non-Tribal Lifeline eligibility requires participation in any of the following programs:

- Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Medicaid (not Medicare)
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
- National School Lunch Program (NSL)
- Wisconsin Works (W2)
- Wisconsin Homestead Tax Credit (Schedule H)
- Badger Care

Those living on federally recognized Tribal lands maybe eligible for federal Enhanced Lifeline and Enhanced Link-Up Plus if they participate in any of the following programs:

- Bureau of Indian Affairs General Assistance
- Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
- Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Head Start
- Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
- Medicaid (not Medicare)
- National School Lunch Program (NSL)
- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Tribal TANF

Eligibility may also be based on total household income at or below 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Lifeline Benefit

You will save \$9.25 on any individual post-paid plan we offer. Qualified residents of Tribal Lands may save as much as \$30.00 per month, in order to lower their local telephone bill to as low as \$1 per month under Enhance Lifeline. These benefits apply to your monthly access charge. All Lifeline customers are responsible for the payment of all applicable taxes, surcharges and fees.

Lifeline can only be used for the main telephone line in a household. The name on your phone bill must match the name of the participant who is eligible for the program.

Application

To apply for Lifeline call 800-236-1461 to request an application, or click [here](#) to download an application. You will need to provide a photocopy of a state issued driver's license or within 48 hours after receipt of the following: (i) completed subscriber agreement, (ii) completed application and (iii) proof of eligibility. Other contract terms may apply.

Proof of Eligibility

You will need to submit a form signed under penalty of perjury verifying that you receive benefits from one of the federal or state programs that comprise the federal eligibility criteria or that you meet the low income criteria. For income-based eligibility, you will need to submit documentation verifying total household income. Your Lifeline benefits will take effect when proof of eligibility is received.

Annual Recertification

Lifeline eligibility is re-confirmed at least annually. Lifeline service will be discontinued when you no longer meet eligibility requirements.

Additional

*Lifeline and Link Up discounts cannot be applied to an outstanding balance owed to your phone company.

*Lifeline can only be applied to one wireless OR one wireline telephone per household be in the name of the qualifying person.

*The applicant's Lifeline coverage plan will be determined by their address of record.

Charges for allotted calling and overages

Anytime Minutes: *Anytime minutes*, or calls that can be placed during peak hours (weekdays between 7 a.m. and 9 p.m.), are the basis for any mobile phone plan. Your basic monthly plan gives you an allotment of anytime minutes per month—the more the minutes, the more expensive the plan. Be sure to keep an eye on those anytime plan minutes. You'd be surprised how easy it is to stray over your allotted minutes, and you'll pay dearly for the oversight—25 cents a minute (40 cents for Alltel plans). Having a hard time cutting your conversations short? Trade in your old plan for one with more minutes. You'll save money in the long term. Also, keep in mind that your carrier counts any fraction of a minute as a whole minute—that means a 5-second check of your home voicemail counts as an entire minute off your monthly allowance.

Nights and Weekends: Off-peak (*or nights and weekends*) minutes are for calls made outside of peak hours. They can help keep your mobile phone bill from going through the roof, but exercise them with caution. Make a note of when your night or weekend begins, and remember that if you place a call at, say, 8:59 p.m., you'll be using your anytime minutes for the entire call. We should also point out that night and weekend minutes start at the appointed hour in the time zone you're traveling in; for instance, if you're an East Coaster traveling in California, your night/weekend minutes would begin at 9 p.m. Pacific time, not Eastern time.

Mobile to Mobile: Otherwise known as *in-carrier* calling minutes, are free minutes to anyone with the same carrier. Mobile to mobile can help cut your monthly mobile bill, especially if your friends and family use the same carrier you do.

Monthly Rate Plan: Recognize this figure? Back when you were a naive mobile phone newbie, you might've thought this was all you'd shell out for your monthly bill. Of course, now you know better.

Anyway, this number represents the static cost of your monthly plan, including anytime, off-peak and in-carrier minutes, as well as features such as call waiting, caller ID, conference calling and voicemail.

Minute Overage Fee: Here's where frustration comes in. Also known as a usage fee, this item typically combines the cost of any minutes you consumed above and beyond those allotted in your monthly plan (carriers also include fees for downloads, data service and text messages that aren't covered by a the rate plan). If you chatted up a storm last month, look for your usage fee—and your entire bill—to skyrocket. Again, the best way to avoid a usage fee is to keep track of your monthly minutes and stay below the limit; or if you're just dying to chat, you can up your allotment of minutes. You can keep track of your minute balance by calling your carrier or going to its Web site. If you have teens bopping around with their own handsets, chances are they're too busy socializing to worry about whether they've used up all their monthly minutes. With prepaid mobile phone plans, your kids get only so many minutes a month; after that, their handsets go dead until they're recharged with more cash.

Text Messaging: Did you get a monthly bucket of SMS messages to go with your monthly rate plan? If so, it's a good idea. For as little as \$4.99 a month, you can buy a pack of 200 text messages, or a charge of \$19.99 a month for unlimited messaging. Did you go over your monthly allotment of text messages? Or worse yet, were you texting without a text-messaging plan? While sending and receiving a text message is a relatively cheap proposition—15 cents each to send and receive—all those text messages can add up.

Messages sent to your friends abroad won't be included in your monthly allotment. They'll cost more, too. They're 25 cents per sent and received message.

Data Plans: Did you send lots of multimedia messages without a monthly plan? They can add up quickly, costing 25 cents per message. MMS are included in individual or unlimited text packages. Did you download any ring tones, wallpaper, games or applications last month? Cha-ching. Surf the Web without a data plan? Look for itemized charges, computed by the kilobyte. Alternatively, if you signed up for a data plan that lets you surf the Web or check e-mail on your handset, you'll find the monthly charge included in the Rate plan, or per line depending on the plan chosen.